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Photo - Eyob Teferi

Reinvigorating Pan-Africanism needs commitment in leadership: Premier

BY HAILE DEMEKE

ADDIS ABABA – Reinvigorating and recalibrating Pan-Africanism requires the current African leaders to disrupt the status quo and leap into the future, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) said, emphasizing the need to think beyond confines.

The Premier made the above remark on Sunday in the first pan-Africanism forum organized by the African Leadership Excellence Academy (AFLEX) in the presence of African heads of state and government.

Abiy further stressed in his speech that Pan-Africanism needs to flourish as an

idea of cooperative integration, global competitiveness, and peaceful coexistence across the continent. “The crisis in global leadership calls for Africans to step up collectively and think beyond their confines.”

See *Reinvigorating ... page 3*



Photo - Ashenafi Animut

Nigerian Journalist, King Richard

AU session guests hail Ethiopia's hospitality

BY YESUF ENDRIS

ADDIS ABABA- Participants of the African Union sessions said they witnessed the much-cherished Ethiopian culture of

See *AU session ... page 3*

Political commitment transforms HoA to peace, prosperity

- *Ethiopia's growing presence in Horn politics commended*

BY ASHENAFI ANIMUT

ADDIS ABABA- It is high time for the Horn of African (HoA) leaders to join efforts to sustainable peace and economic integration in the region and the continent at large, a political analyst said.

Speaking to *The Ethiopian Herald*, East African Geopolitical Analyst Tigistu Awelu stated that the leaders should stand strong and committed to forging political and socioeconomic interconnectedness and lifting their people from poverty. To this happen, the formulation of viable policies and strategies that could translate into public

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East African Geopolitical Analyst Tigistu Awelu

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AU reaffirms zero tolerance for unconstitutional gov't change

- *Oaths to push forward AFCFTA's implementation*

BY GIRMACHEW GASHAW

ADDIS ABABA- The African Union (AU) has reaffirmed zero tolerance for unconstitutional change of governments and made an oath to push the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) forward.

Consulting on a range of challenges including coups, conflict, and climate change, the AU wrapped up the two-day-long summit by passing a viable decision.

The AU said it has revoked the suspension of four countries – Burkina Faso, Guinea, Mali, and Sudan, which have been ruled by coup-oriented military leadership, and it is

See *AU reaffirms... page 3*

News

Afar 's wheat irrigation project witnesses success

BY TSEGAYE TILAHUN

WERER – About 70 percent of Ethiopia's irrigated wheat pilot project has been proven success in Afar State, Amibara district, Afar State Chief Administrator Awe l Arba said.

On Saturday, a delegation visited improved wheat seed production activities in Afar State, Werer Agricultural Research Center in Afar State.

The Chief Administrator Awol Arba on the occasion said: "Ethiopia has to fill the wheat production gaps and quotas as giant global wheat producer countries are in trouble. It is not only the issue of exporting wheat products, but also we have a responsibility to maximize production and productivity."

Afar State has been registering successes in overall sectors especially in irrigated wheat pilot project production activities overcoming COVID-19 impact and conflict



repercussions, he added.

As to him, one can build a strong economy and country building hard-working citizens. Wheat production pilot project is succeeded in Afar State of Amibara district and the recent effort of the country is to do so is encouraging.

Werer Agricultural Research Center Director Shimelis Alemayehu on his part said that some 1,326 hectares of land covered with improved wheat seed production to support wheat production efforts to expand irrigated wheat technologies across the country. It is also expected to harvest 39 to 53 quintals of wheat products.

The Center disseminated for beneficiaries by adopting over 682 improved working systems and data conducting research. And it benefited over 60, 000 households, he stated.

Ethiopian Institute of Agricultural Research (EIAR) Director-General FetoEsimo (PhD) said that Afar State has a huge potential for irrigated wheat development. However, other states utilized their maximum capacity. The state has untapped potential, but it has a responsibility to exploit and scale up irrigated wheat production efforts using new technologies.

The institute has been emphasizing increasing irrigated wheat production and productivity in the lowlands to achieve self-sufficiency to an ever-growing population. The improved seed adaptation has been boosting production and productivity of agriculture in the country, he added.

Citizens urged to build better country drawing lessons from history

BY BETELHEM BEDLU

ADDIS ABABA- It is through a deep understanding of the past history that the current generation could preserve unity and build a better Ethiopia, the Ethiopian Patriotic Association President said.

Speaking to the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA), the Ethiopian Patriotic Association President Lij Daniel Jote Mesfin stated that acquiring deep knowledge and understanding of the past serves best to build a better country in the future.

"Due to enormous sacrifice of our forefathers/ mothers, the current generation lives with dignity. Thus, Ethiopians need to carry out activities to sustain the unity and development of the country," he underscored.

He went on saying: "The footprint that our forefathers /mothers engraved in our blood has kept the country from the enemies, who are perpetrating evil acts 24/7 to disrupt its peace and development."

Nonetheless, the more Ethiopians realize that the priceless sacrifice of their forefathers/ mothers, the better they would value their country. Therefore, commemorating the day has paramount of significance in this regard, he added.

To this end, concerned institutions including media houses should exert their responsibilities in disseminating the right information.

Reminding that over 30,000 Ethiopians were massacred by the troops of Fascist Italy in three days, he underlined that a lesson should be drawn from the incident with regards to maintaining unity.

Senior government officials as well as several Ethiopians commemorated the 86th Martyrs Day in the vicinity of Yekatit 12 Monument remembering the massacre of close to 30,000 innocent residents of Addis Ababa, it was learnt.

Ethiopia sends earthquake relief to Turkiye

BY ESSEYE MENGISTE

ADDIS ABABA - Ethiopian Ambassador to Turkiye disclosed that Ethiopia has handed over aid to assist the victims of the recent earthquake in southern Turkiye.

In his twitter page, Amb. Adem Mohammed stated that the team from Ethiopia coming to support Turkiye handed over aid materials, and the team started its work yesterday in Hatay.

"Team of Ethiopia left Addis Ababa at night and reached Gazantep, where the disaster took place, to provide the necessary support for the needy in Turkey due to the earthquake. "Ethiopia is always with Turkiye," Ambassador Adem said.

Furthermore, Ethiopian Airlines has exerted efforts to transport humanitarian aid to Turkiye and Syria.

The earthquakes have wrought destruction across southern Turkiye and northwestern Syria, displacing thousands and pushing them into makeshift cities filled with shipping container homes or rows of tents, said Murat Kurum, Head of the Ministry of Environment and Urbanization Turkey, as *The Washington Post* reported.

At the Incirlik Air Base in Turkiye, U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken announced that the United States would send an additional 100 million USD to help people affected by the earthquakes. The Biden administration pledged 85 million USD shortly after the quakes.

Recently PM Abiy Ahmed conveyed his deepest condolences to Turkiye in a phone call, over the loss of lives and property destruction by the earthquake.

PM added that Ethiopia is always committed to help a friend in need and



extends its humble support of materials and send rescue teams to the recovery work in Turkiye.

Ministry performs well in six-month assessment

BY DANIEL ALEMAYEHU

HAWASSA- Ministry of Urban and Infrastructure (MoUI) is ranked 2nd in six-month performance assessments of the current fiscal year among the federal institutions.

Speaking at the recent event organized to present half-year performance report of this fiscal year, MoUI Minister Chaltu Sani said though the construction sector is under various pressures, MoUI has been taking a number of decisive actions to overcome the challenges and to achieve tangible improvements in the sector.

As to the minister, experience has been drawn in terms of accomplishing mega projects, coming up with capacity building activities, forming different codes and standards.

Talking about the nation's mega projects

initiated by the Prime Minister, Chaltu Said: "Capacity building, housing development programs, green infrastructure development and land management, city reform works, and digitalization works are the major thematic areas in which the ministry will focus in the years to come."

As to her, safety net program is one of the best practices that the government has been acting on. Accordingly, the ministry has played its part to increase the number of beneficiary areas from 11 to 84 areas in the country.

"In the capital city, the culture of saving has increased and it has brought better results. However, urban housing development has become one of the major challenges for residents. To reduce the challenges, the government has evaluated steps and decided to bring the private sector to invest."

Government's plan to build houses for

citizens have not brought the desired results but the move to bring the private sector has shown some improvements," Chaltu added.

At the event, Hawassa city administration Mayor Ass. Prof. Tsegaye Tukie said that the city administration has tried to curb illegal actions apart from exerting efforts to make the city a favorable place to live and work.

To make the city more favorable to tourists, as to the mayor, the city administration has started undertaking and upgrading major projects including, Tabor Mountain, Gate Hawassa, and Gudumalle projects. Besides, the administration has installed security cameras, and constructed walkways and cycle roads.

The ministry has provided over 1,800 construction work professionals with trainings revolving around home-grown construction management manuals and safety works, it was learnt.

News

DBE to commence work creativity training for 435,000 youths

- ready to provide 30 bln. Birr credit

BY MISGANAW ASNAKE

ADDIS ABABA—Development Bank of Ethiopia (DBE) stated that it has finalized preparations to offer training for about 435,000 youth trainees in fourth round to enable economically self-sufficient and encourage work creativity in the country.

DBE President Yohannes Ayalew (PhD) briefed the media that during the fourth round, DBE had planned to register 50,000 trainees of small and medium enterprises but able to register about 435,000 trainees all over the nation and of which trainees 35 percent are women.

“The training would start on February 21, 2023 all over the nation in order to create economically self-sufficient youth in the nation and encourage the work creativity at the same time. On this round, about 200 trainers will train the registered youth trainees.”

200 million USD fund is preparing for this purpose by the help of World Bank and other countries such as France and Germany have shown keen interest to provide funds on such type of project, as to him.

The training would be given in 56 towns and 95 centers which would be provided for the consecutive of five days on business

training, he said.

So far, the bank has provided the training for 2,100 trainees in first, 2,900 in second and 35,000 trainees for third round all over the nation on various areas.

The trainees would engage in agriculture mechanization, textile, leather, mining and construction sectors in the nation according to their interest and their areas of department they have graduated.

DBE’s total capital has reached around 36 billion Birr and on this budget year the bank has planned to provide credit of 30 billion Birr to enterprises.



Reinvigorating Pan-Africanism...

“This year marks the 60th anniversary of the founding of the OAU and we also observe the 10th year anniversary of the launching of Agenda 2063 in which these two milestones capture the spirit of today’s forum, celebrating the past and envisioning the future.”

He added: “As we reflect on our past journey of many achievements and setbacks, and as we navigate a changing world, it is imperative we also dream and define the decades that lie ahead of us. Hence, reinvigorating Pan-Africanism for a changing world is a critical assignment we must take up in our aspiration to articulate and elevate our AU.”

The changing world and its yet-to-be-defined order call for a new brand of leaders that are agenda setters, creative thinkers, and solution makers. AfLEX, the venue for the forum, is an academy that will raise and shape such African leaders and such events are the necessary platform to cultivate a habit of dialoguing into the future.

Presenting a paper on Pan-Africanism, Prof. Kehinde Andrews said that Africa has passed through several challenges such as interference and pressure from some developed countries. To overcome the pressing challenges and keep the continent moving forward, the unity of Africans is crucial.

Another panelist AdefiresWorku (PhD), who presented a paper on Green Legacy Initiative, pointed out that the initiative has been playing a significant role in strengthening the ever-growing integration and resilience of Africa. The forum is also vital in revitalizing and sustaining connectivity among African countries and beyond.

The forum was attended by several Heads of State and Government including Nigerian President, MuhammaduBuhari, President of Burundi, SE EvaristeNdayishimiye, and President of Somalia, Hassan Sheikh Mohamud.

Political commitment transforms...

and resource mobilization is critical.

As to him, most of the political, social and economic problems in the Horn are legacies of colonial powers and the tradition pushing the continent into instability, military coup, civil war, cross border tensions and other upheavals.

Also, the malpractices of some African leaders, economic dependency, uncivilized conflict resolution mechanisms, and other factors impacted the continent’s capability to solve internal problems by its methods.

“Considering this, it is high time for African leaders to move in unison to undo the evil legacies of colonialism and help the birth of a new continent that will be independent of foreign dictations. And despite some challenges, immense opportunities are ahead for Horn countries.”

Tigistu further commented that fostering Pan-Africanism and regional integration are instruments for resolving internal problems in negotiation and a peaceful manner. The Pretoria peace accord that the Ethiopian government could cease the two-year conflict in the northern part of the country is an ideal

example of this.”

Moreover, AU ideals such as Silencing the Gun, AfCFTA, and others are hanging on the determination of African leaders and other relevant global partners. “To see the light of the day, these goals require the firm commitment and sense of belongingness among African leaders.”

Regarding Ethiopia, the analyst highlighted that the country is expected to forge a strong partnership with all neighbors and solidify the engagement with various regional blocs including IGAD, ECOSOC, and ECOWAS. “Apart from its formidable role in the Horn peace, Ethiopia should also capitalize on the Abay Dam to integrate the region through electricity.

Noting the construction of the dam has been executed without interruption, he emphasized that the government’s priority for the project is justifiable since it would be an engine to Ethiopia’s industrialization. A collaborative project of the public and the government, the dam is of immense use to the growth of the economy.

AU session guests hail Ethiopia’s

hospitality from residents and hotels alike.

Approached by *The Ethiopian Herald*, a Nigerian Journalist, King Richard, said he found people and hotels in Addis Ababa are welcoming and decent. “It is my first time to be in Ethiopia; but I feel more at home and comfortable. Addis is truly the capital of Africa.”

“Throughout my stay here, the cheerful and sociable ride driver picked me up from my hotel doorstep to the AU Headquarters and drove me back. Honestly, my stay in Addis is something memorable and will stay in my mind for a long time.”

Richard also slammed some international media’s false portrayal of Ethiopia and called on the former to exercise ethical and professional journalism while covering the current situation in the country. “Owing to some corporate media’s representation of Ethiopia as a place of disorder, I was a bit scared to come here. However, reality allows me to feel protected.”

The corporate media pursue a biased

approach towards developing countries and some big outlets including CNN will not report poverty in Europe or somewhere in the U.S. “Few kilometers away from the White House, there are poor and destitute people. But, the media will never show you them on TV.”

Still, most of the western media are more concerned with telling stories of uncertainties and portraying the whole continent as a center of poverty and conflict. Africa’s media shoulder the responsibility to build the image of the continent and should exert consolidated efforts in this regard.”

Another participant of the AU Summit from Mozambique also praised the services Addis Ababa hotels rendered for their guests.

“I was here before the time of Covid-19 lockdown and the hotels’ services were not at a desired level. Now, the service is quite impressive and satisfies the desire of high-level AU dignitaries. I think this improvement emanates from the professionalization of Ethiopia’s hospitality industry.”

AU reaffirms zero tolerance for...

necessary to re-emphasize that the AU remains intolerant to any undemocratic means of political power.

At the event, the African Union Commission (AUC) Chairperson Moussa Faki Mahamat said: “The assembly reaffirmed zero tolerance against coups. The unconstitutional change of government is not acceptable and we need to find means to discourage that. So we are mindful and lay sanctions. We understand that economic sanctions affect the social fiber of these countries. That is why we put targeted sanctions. Thus, the population does not suffer.”

The Commission is ready to support these member states to return to constitutional order to help them enjoy running democracy and the system must take root, be well nurtured and protected as well.

Regarding AfCFTA, Comoros President and AU chairperson Azali Assoumani on the occasion said: “The leaders had agreed to accelerate the implementation of a faltering

trade deal launched in 2020. I shall leave no stone unturned to ensure that this becomes a reality.”

Intra-African trade has currently accounted for only 15 percent and AfCFTA aims to boost the performance by 60 percent in 2034 eliminating almost all tariffs. However, implementation has fallen well short of that goal, running into hurdles including disagreements over tariff reductions and border closures caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.

According to the AUC Chairperson, the deal was strategic for the continent, but he warned that the infrastructure to allow for its success was still lagging behind as close to 600 million Africans did not have access to electricity.

The AfCFTA agreement will create the largest free trade area in the world, measured by the number of countries participating. The pact will connect 1.3 billion people across 55 countries with a combined GDP valued at 3.4 trillion USD, it was learned.

Opinion

A long journey for Africa to transform education sector

BY MENGISTEAB TESHOME

Africa is left with a long and arduous journey to transform the education sector as quarter a billion children are out of schooling. This chilling fact was herald at the Addis Ababa on 42nd Ordinary Session of the AU Executive Council in February 2023.

Africa will grow its population and today's children will be the talent tomorrow's global companies will be recruiting. Findings prove that in the next 30 years, it is projected that sub-Saharan Africa's working-age population will increase more than twofold—accounting for 68 percent of the world's total growth.

Economists have shown that when controlling for other factors, increasing girls' and boys' years of schooling has a positive effect on economic growth. Ensuring girls' secondary education is particularly impactful. Providing high-quality education today will help build the skills for the world's future workforce, increase incomes, grow economies, and expand markets and trading partners.

But to the contrary, Africa is not pacing to meet the demand and let fellow citizens enjoy the banquet of education and improve livelihood through quality education.

Though no one dares to deny the achievements of African in improving access, equity, and quality of education, the argument is the pace do not much to the other nations, African is left the long way to go.

According to “Transforming Education in Africa: An evidence-based overview and recommendations for long-term improvements”, highlights the progress made in the continent's education sector over the past decade from the perspective of the Sustainable Development Goals and the objectives of the Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA 2016–2025).

It highlights the challenges that remain, particularly in the area of equity. By 2050, 1 in 2 Africans will be under 25 years of age. The continent will be home to 1 billion children and adolescents aged 0-18. With the right opportunities, this young and fast-growing population can be a powerful source of growth and progress in Africa, and the world.

The report notes that despite the progress made in recent years, many African children are still out of school, and some who are in school are not acquiring basic literacy and numeracy skills, with the poorest children being the most excluded. The report offers recommendations to African policymakers for a more equitable education system that is in tune with the demands of the century.

The AU Commissioner for Education, Science, Technology and Innovation, Professor Mohammed Belhocine in Addis Ababa this week said that the urgency to transform education in Africa.

According to the AU Commissioner, currently,

African governments have the principal responsibility for adequate financing of basic education and the democratic governments are willing to strengthen this sector as per their needs

250 million children are not going to school in Africa and 17 million teachers, in addition to those who are here, we would need.

“It gives you an idea on the challenges that we have in terms of education in our continent. For us to bring all these people to school, we would need. But we have also challenges as those students who have got the opportunity to go to school are not receiving quality education.” he added.

According to the Former Head, Department of African Studies, University of Delhi Prof. Suresh Kumar once said that there is a need to change the education system that should fit in the existing market environment to absorb the educated African youth on the land itself and avoid any more brain drains in Europe or America. It needs a major overhauling in the education sector.

There is nothing magical about what

proportion of its national spending a country sets aside for education—except that such allocation can be a good measure of an affected country's ‘commitment to development through education’.

Africa seeks to renew the education system by adding the implant and authenticating social values, tackling the collapse of values and anomie so prevalent in the national society, instilling desirable values like cooperation, honesty, equity, justice, consensus, and collaborating and attacking extant regionalism antithetical to national integration. Briefly, the knowledge that comes from education is necessary for good governance and constitutional guarantees like free and compulsory education and equal opportunities for employment barring the regional divisions in the society.

Education strengthens the means of income today and paves the way for secured education, higher income and better employment for the future generation. Education influences social welfare through its indirect effects on health, fertility, and life expectancy and helps to increase the profitability of other forms of social and physical investment. Broadly, development is the integral element of education throughout the world including Africa with the following objectives such as:

Firstly, the young human resource of African society needs education and human and financial resources permit, with the ultimate goal of developing a comprehensive scientific system of education of all levels and for all age groups.

Secondly, the African governments should pursue free and compulsory education taking care of the equitable distribution of educational opportunities in urban as well as rural areas to minimize the existing inequalities based on sex, economic status, and geography.

Thirdly, Africa needs to accomplish modern education policy for the betterment and optimum use of resources and avoid the students dropping out or repeating grades. A good number of Universities in India have adopted a four-year bachelor program with the understanding to minimize the drop out of students on the one hand and provide the certificate (diploma after two years, graduate degree after passing three years and graduate honors degree after four years) as per their qualifications.

Fourthly, the modern education policy should be directly connected to the job market that will equip the students with the knowledge and skills needed to find employment. The University curriculum in Africa should adopt common foundation course in the first year in their respective disciplines (Art, Commerce, Science and Social Sciences students), discipline course-I in the second year, discipline course-II in the third year and application course in the fourth year.

The scope of the students after having a diploma can be good teachers in schools

with relevant prequalification, can work in NGOs, in the retail business, and run a crèche or playschools. Similarly, after having a Bachelor degree, students can work in NGOs, retail sectors, BPO industry, technical jobs in the media industry and fashion houses and after completing four years, students are more specialized in their respective disciplines; and

Fifthly, Africa needs to strengthen the institutional capacity to formulate and carry out education policy and to plan, analyze, manage, and evaluate education and training program and projects at all levels.

African governments have the principal responsibility for adequate financing of basic education and the democratic governments are willing to strengthen this sector as per their needs. The governments need to facilitate the partnership at all levels with civil society, agencies, the private sector, NGOs, religious groups, communities, parents and teachers' associations, teachers' trade unions and families. The African education system needs to play an important part in strengthening economic development by adopting the following parameters such as:

- To accomplish the socio-economic needs of the children, it must review and redesign education curriculum and teaching methods.
- The reading material should be developed, produced and distributed at an affordable price.
- Integrate education into the family, community and the workplace.
- Introduce democratic values and practices into the conduct of teaching and learning.
- Develop field work/project work/excursion/co-curricular activities and linkage the education with the industries, NGOs, social sector and others.
- The print and television media network should encourage organizing the public discourse on current educational issues in schools, colleges and universities.
- Develop the internet network to connect the education system of home countries with the international education pattern spreading awareness worldwide.

To sum up my view, it is high time to think about next generation not only next election campaigns and garner the return of education. Africans should not grabble with putting in place the right measure to ensure access, equity and quality education at their respective countries.

In my view quality without access could lead to inequality and exclusion and access without quality will also limit the potential and will not bring the desired results.

Editor's Note: The views entertained in this article do not necessarily reflect the stance of The Ethiopian Herald

Editorial

Prime time for expediting African emancipation

In the just ended week, African leaders marked two indispensable milestones: the 60 anniversary of the formation of the OAU and the 10 year anniversary of the launching of agenda 2063 centering the spirit of Pan-Africanism.

In connection with this Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed said, “Pan-Africanism should flourish as an idea of cooperative integration, global competitiveness and peaceful coexistence.”

This is such a comprehensive utterance potentially calls for collaboration, firm commitment and being people of their words to make Africa’s vision—being free from undue foreign interference and possessing full discretion to regulate its own affairs—real.

Pan-Africanism incorporating global competitive capacity, spotlighting peaceful agreement over disputes as well as attracting African youth and women to the forefront of leadership has to be well nurtured and put into effect.

In so doing, it would be possible to come up with livable, safe and luring Africa, which can be an influential global partner. Since this could hardly be created out of the blue, countries of the continent should be committed enough to sustainably implement programs and projects. As part of their efforts to come up with remarkable outcomes in the years to come, leaders have to draw important lessons via properly monitoring and evaluating the undertakings carried out over the past ten years to pave avenues for the next task, to be hit in the next decades out of the 2063 journey.

Unambiguously, countries of the continent are willing to accelerate inclusive recovery efforts to boost economic growth via applying multiple technological, financial, health, educational and socio-cultural dynamics molded with Pan-Africanism.

Pan-Africanism is not a mere compilation of ideas but a document comprising a continental vision reflecting the level where Africa would like to reach in 2063.

Africa has now been determined enough to work hard towards ensuring food security, garnering self-reliance, keeping internal peace within its own reach and self-deciding on all continental matters.

Africans must thus stay on the path paved by forefathers and foremothers to further promote unity, fraternity and faithful spirit amongst them as strengthening Pan-Africanism would enable Africa to revive development, safeguard sovereignty and uphold territorial integrity.

Needless to state, African countries are endowed with abundant resources in terms of both renewable and nonrenewable ones. Hence, Pan-Africanism is an idea of cooperative integration, global competitiveness and peaceful coexistence to help them reap the benefits they deserve out of the sources. Yes, Africans are these days advancing into the future at a fast-tracking rate in a bid to create new Africa with complete freedom.

The continent has encountered many achievements and pitfalls on its past journey in due course of navigating the realm. It is imperative for African leaders to map out to where they are heading and define the decade long trek reinvigorating Pan-Africanism thereby helping the continent enjoy radical change.

In sum, African leaders have to collectively step up and think out of the box to be new brand frontrunners, agenda setters, creative thinkers and solution makers with a view to emancipating the continent from neocolonialism traps. Besides, Africans have to nurture development and growth oriented mindset holding a Pan-African orientation with the capacity to meet Africa’s demands. They have to attach due emphasis to Pan-Africanism, which is instrumental in safeguarding the continent fueling the fight against poverty via reinvigorating economic and social development.



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opinion

The need to accelerate regional economic integration

BY STAFF REPORTER

A free trade area is a region in which a number of countries have signed a free trade agreement and maintain little or no barriers to trade in the form of tariffs or quotas among one another. They facilitate international trade and the associated gains from trade along with the international division of labor and specialization, but they have been criticized for costs that are associated with increasing economic integration and for artificially restraining free trade.

For example the North American Free Trade Agreement was an agreement signed by Canada, Mexico, and the United States that created a trilateral trade bloc in North America. The agreement came into force on January 1, 1994, and superseded the 1988 Canada–United States Free Trade Agreement between the United States and Canada.

Some of the positive effects of NAFTA were increased trade, economic output, foreign investment, and better consumer prices. Free trade areas are also implemented in other parts of the world especially in Asia. The well-known Free Trade Area of Asia-Pacific is one of the well-known regional economic blocs in the world.

Africa has yet to struggle to establish an effective continental economic integration. The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), the flagship project of the African Union Agenda 2063 is now on the pipeline as countries are pushing for the faster implementation.

The continent has 40 percent of the world’s gold and up to 90 percent of its chromium and platinum. The largest reserves of cobalt, diamonds, platinum and uranium in the world are in Africa. It holds 65 per cent of the world’s arable land and ten percent of the planet’s internal renewable fresh water source.

In addition to its untapped wealth in mining, Africa is also endowed with innumerable amount of water resources that can assist its growth prospect in agriculture, fishery, hydropower and tourism, among others.

The AfCFTA promises broader and deeper economic integration and would attract investment, boost trade, provide better jobs, reduce poverty, and increase shared prosperity in Africa.

For this end acting Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), Antonio Pedro has urged African nations to accelerate implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) in order to become more resilient and globally competitive, according to UNECA.

“Only through an accelerated and effective implementation of the AfCFTA can Africa build sufficient shock absorbers to build resilience,” said Mr Pedro in his remarks at the 42nd Ordinary Session of the African

Union Executive Council meeting in Addis Ababa on February 15, 2023.

Launched in 2019 to establish a unified market of 1.3 billion people and a GDP of around US\$ 3.4 trillion, the AfCFTA is poised to become the world’s largest free trade area with 55 member states.

Mr Pedro deplored the fact that the COVID-19 pandemic and the Russia-Ukraine war have caused a state of crisis, pushing 55 million people below the poverty line and exacerbating inequalities.

High global inflation has also led to tighter financial conditions. Mr Pedro said despite Africa’s economic growth of 3.9% in 2023 and 2024, more still needs to be done to compensate for the losses experienced in the past three years.

Pedro added that by fast-tracking the implementation of the AfCFTA, Africa can provide solutions to the global challenges of supply chain disruptions, food insecurity, climate change, and migration.

Highlighting that the AfCFTA provides the economy of scale to invest in manufacturing and increased intra-Africa trade, Mr. Pedro said the free trade area would bring supply chains closer to home and inject self-sufficiency in essential products such as medicines, food and fertilizers.

“By providing more opportunities for women and the youth, the AfCFTA helps reduce inequality and poverty, and improves inclusion,” he said.

However, Mr Pedro highlighted two challenges that require immediate attention – ratification and implementation - and appealed to the ten African countries that have not yet ratified the agreement to do so soon.

Commenting on resource-based industrialization, Mr Pedro said this should focus on value addition, smart operationalization of local content policies, and tapping into global value chains.

He cited the Battery and Electric Vehicle (BEV) sector as one that could enable the continent to tap into a global value expected to reach US\$8.8 trillion in the next three years and US\$46 trillion by 2050. The ECA is supporting BEV value chain with “strong political will from the Democratic Republic of Congo and Zambia,” said Mr Pedro.

ECA is also partnering with stakeholders to support the transboundary agro-industry park and special economic zone involving Zambia and Zimbabwe, which could address food security concerns and tap into Africa’s food import market valued at about US\$90 billion per year.

Mr Pedro pledged ECA’s continued support and collaboration with the African Union and other stakeholders to transform Africa into a globally competitive investment destination.

Editor’s Note: The views entertained in this article do not necessarily reflect the stance of The Ethiopian Herald

Business & Economy

Strengthening regional cooperation through enforcing trade agreement

BY ABEBE WOLDEGIORGIS

Trade plays crucial role in boosting economy, creating enabling environment for business cooperation and regional integration. Agriculture is a back bone of Ethiopia's economy. It contributes about 75 percent of the export volume. The products are exported mostly in their raw form without adding value and such situation puts the country in the disadvantageous position.

According to the Ministry of Finance, in the last budget year, Ethiopia earned 3 billion Dollars from export. As to experts, had the export products been exported with value addition instead of in their raw form, the money obtained from the export would have been doubled. Ethiopia exports agricultural products to the outside market such as coffee, spices, pulses, oil seeds and skin and hides in their raw form and obtained currency in average and less competitive price. But it can make it processed by roasting coffee, changing skin and hides in to leather and oil seeds in to edible oil so that can obtain more money.

The other option that make the country more advantageous in regional trade is maximizing its export to neighbouring countries through exploiting trade conventions in which Ethiopia is signatory. To that end, cooperating with multilateral partners is vital.

Recently, The Economic Commission for Africa - a think tank with specialist expertise in African and international trade policy has announced that it recommitted to helping Ethiopia's trade policy agenda that aims to foster industrialization and sustained economic growth.

Although Ethiopia remained outside the regional and global trading regimes for a long time, this is now changing. Not only has Ethiopia ratified the Agreement Establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area AfCFTA, it is also negotiating its accession to the World Trade Organisation /WTO/.

However, neither the negotiations to join the WTO, nor the efforts to implement the AfCFTA Agreement has been smooth sailing. The political decision to change course and put Ethiopia at the trade policy decision making table has yet to be fully translated into a practice.

"The political resolve to be part of these regional and global trade regimes is clearly there, but it has not been matched by the technical capacity to translate this political will to concrete outcome," ECA Director, Regional Integration and Trade Division, Stephen Karingi, said at a Roundtable on Multi-partner Support on Trade Policy to Ethiopia organized on the 10th of February by the British Embassy in Addis Ababa in collaboration with ECA.

Karingi confirmed that ECA is ready to work with all the partners to support the Government of Ethiopia while the Ethiopian private sector realizes the country's trade

policy priorities at the national, bilateral, regional, continental and global levels.

The ECA has supported Ethiopia in trade policy development and conducted the first of its kind analysis on the economic impact of the country's participation in the AfCFTA. Furthermore, the ECA has supported training programmes organized for leaders and senior staff of the Ethiopian Chamber of Commerce and Sectorial Associations and the Addis Ababa Chamber of Commerce. Recently, ECA commissioned the translation of the text of the AfCFTA Agreement into Amharic to make it closer to the people.

Opening the round table, Ethiopia's State Minister for Trade Integration and Export Promotion, Mr Kassahun Gofe, said advancing the WTO and AfCFTA engagement were a key tool to consolidate the domestic economic reforms achieved so far.

"In regards to the AfCFTA, it opens a new era of trade governance in Africa, and it must be viewed as an opportunity to implement necessary structural reforms in African countries," he observed.

President of Ethiopian Chamber of Commerce and Sectorial Associations ECCSA, Mr Melaku Ezezew, welcomed the roundtable meeting as most opportune after a lull in action since Ethiopia ratified the AfCFTA. Melaku Ezezew, President of Ethiopian Chamber of Commerce and Sectorial Associations /ECCSA/, citing the failure of closed-door economic policies which have hurt Ethiopia's trade competitiveness, therefore, the private sector needs to overcome the challenges of poor access to finance, a weak competition regulatory regime and inadequate institutional coordination which were all linked to poor policy development and implementation.

"Better regulation is a better environment to do business; better regulation is less transaction costs; better regulation is improved competitiveness for the Ethiopian business sector," said Ezezew, noting that a bulk of the Ethiopian business sector was not informed about the AfCFTA and the WTO.

Mr Paul Walters, Development Director at the British Embassy in Ethiopia told participants that the UK has long been a champion of the liberal, open and rules-based international trading system which can be cascaded with Ethiopia's own vision for its future as articulated in its Home Grown Economic Reform programme.

"We firmly believe that Ethiopia's future is in the AfCFTA and the WTO," Walters said, affirming UK's commitment to assisting Ethiopia build trade policy capacity and foster private and public sector engagement in trade policy development.

Evidence suggests that, Ethiopia's membership of the WTO and meaningful trading under the AfCFTA will increase economic growth, forex-generating exports, FDI and create jobs. Furthermore, this

will also enhance the transparency and predictability of its business environment as Ethiopia conforms to international standards on issues like investor protection and customs processes.

After removing the Dergue regime in 1991, the now defunct EPRDF regime ambitiously tried to change the economic land scape from command to that of the free market.

It introduced new laws which encourage the flourishing of both local and private investment. The bank and insurance sector which was monopolized by the government during the Dergue socialist era opened to the private sector and since then the sector has been flourishing. The finance sector also expanded its business areas all over the country and reached the emerging private business from small and medium size to the large investment particularly to the manufacturing and agriculture.

So far, the private sector is booming even though it faces some challenges. It created job opportunities to thousands, enable to transfer technology and knowledge, played pivotal role in boosting export and substituting imports. It also created linkage between agriculture and the manufacturing. It absorbed agricultural products as inputs, processed it and supplies to both domestic and foreign markets.

However, many private investors claim that the shortage of hard currency in banks and the growing inflation restricted them not to unleash their potential in full scale.

To mitigate the crises the government has put direction to boost the nation's foreign currency earning capacity through boosting export, encouraging Ethiopian diaspora to send remittance in the formal channel, tracing and putting culprits in to legal liability who engaged in money laundering and illegal trade among others. The recent permission of foreign banks to operate here expected to shore up scarcity of hard currency.

To integrate the nation's economy to the international market for the last 25 years, the government has been trying its level best to introduce laws that can fit Ethiopia a member of the World Trade Organization /WTO/ so that it can enjoy in pulling Foreign Direct Investment.

On the other hand, the government to liberalise the economy recently in its 2nd Home Grown Economic Plan, announced to enhance the transaction value of rural land so that investors get access to land and put their money on agriculture. In fact, it is undeniable fact that, in the last two years the nation's economy has suffered from COVID19 and the war broke out in the northern most point of the country which cost human as well as animal life and incurred infrastructural damage. According to experts, to reinvigorate the economy it may take decades.

ECA is made up of 54 Member States and plays a dual role as a regional arm of the UN and as a key component of the African institutional landscape.

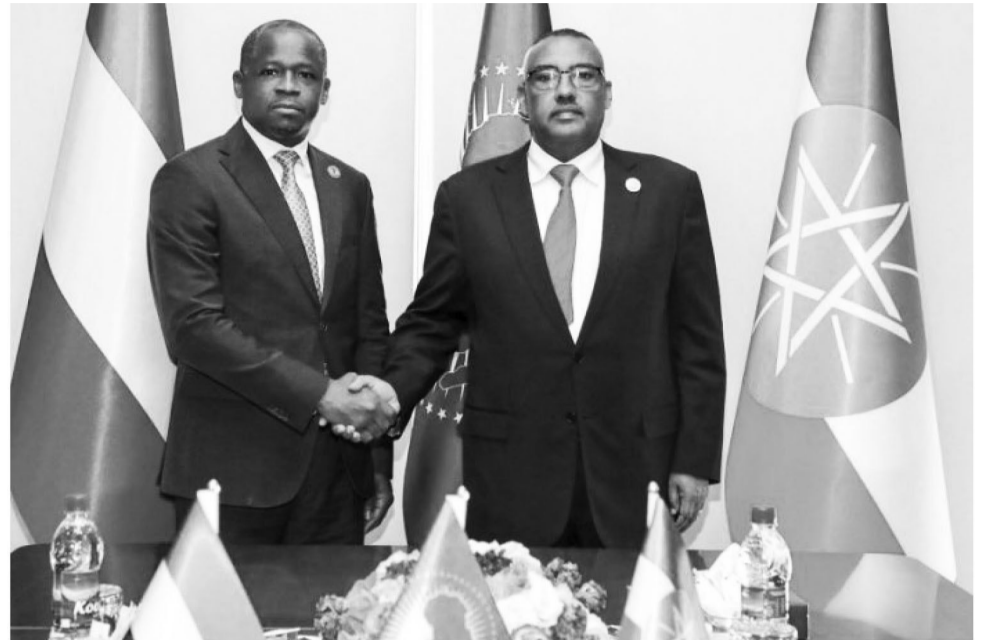
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In the Sphere of Diplomacy

Ethiopia's diplomacy on the sideline of the 36th African Union Summit



Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed held discussion with African Development Bank (AfDB) President Akinwumi Adesina. The PM said AfDB's continued support to our agricultural sector is critical, particularly in our wheat productivity endeavors and other key produces.



Addis Ababa (ENA) February 16/2023 Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Affairs Minister Demeke Mekonen has held discussions with foreign ministers of five different African countries on the margins of the ongoing AU summit.



Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed has discussed with U.S Assistant Secretary of State, Mary Catherine Phee on the margins of the AU Summit in Addis Ababa. The discussion focused on progress made on implementation of the Peace Agreement.



Demeke held the discussions with foreign ministers of Gabon, Gambia, Malawi, Tunisia and Libya on the margins of the 42nd Ordinary Session of the Executive Council of the African Union.



According to him, the deputy premier pointed out the importance Ethiopia places on peace and the steps being taken to implement the peace agreement.



Foreign Affairs Spokesperson, Meles Alem, who attended the discussions with the stated foreign ministers, said Demeke briefed the officials about peace and development activities in Ethiopia

(Source: ENA)

Law & Politics

Continental approval to Ethiopia's peace deal

BY ADDISALEM MULAT

Since the announcement of the peace talks between the federal government and Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), some doomsayers have been many a time and oft dragging through the mud the positive developments blossoming in the northern part of the country giving a lower profile to the vital role the AU-brokered peace deal has been playing in restoring peace and tranquility.

The peace negotiation led by the AU High Representative for the Horn of Africa Olusegun Obasanjo, former President Uhuru Kenyatta of the Republic of Kenya, and other authorities have been harvesting the fruits of success contrary to what the doomsayers have been saying.

But the truth is that the AU brokered peace deal has been receiving a pat on the back from the wider international community.

Regardless of the fact that the cessation of hostilities agreement has been returning the situation in the northern part of the country into normalcy in the spirit of Africanism, some naysayers have continued doing a hatchet job on the positive moves of the peace implementation.

In actual fact, the agreement demonstrates the capability of the AU-led peace talks in ensuring peace and tranquility and silencing the gun without the interference of third party and backseat drivers.

Even though the delivery of humanitarian assistance and restoration of social infrastructures has been going on according to the terms of the deal, the country's adversaries have embarked on sowing doubts on the positive developments of the peace implementation.

It is common knowledge that in the aftermath of the positive moves blossoming in the length and breadth of the northern part of the country, the global community has been affirming its unflinching stance to stand by the side of the federal government to give rise to peace implementation.

It is important to highlight that the peace accord signed in Pretoria between the two parties under the auspicious of the African Union (AU) has been playing a part in consolidating African capacity and becoming an impetus to get to the bottom of African problems in its own way.

Apart from safeguarding the interest of the continent of Africa, the AU-led peace talks have been playing a huge role in showing the world the capacity of Africa in resolving its problems in its own way through a round table discussion.

Since the start of the war, some foreign entities have been downplaying the AU in resolving Africa's conflicts.

But no matter what they say, the peace implementation has been making progress in the right direction and attaining the intended destination. In the present circumstances, the AU-brokered peace deal has been producing results and forestalling



the conflict devoid of the involvement of any third party's dictation.

It is interesting to note that, since the onset of the war, the incumbent has been showing its firm stance acting in accordance with the cessation of hostilities agreement and returning the whole thing in Tigray State to normalcy. Besides, the positive moves being taken by the federal government to normalize the situation in Northern Ethiopia have been bearing fruits and showing results.

As things stand at the moment, the peace implementation has been going through extremely crucial steps and receiving world acclamation, and ensuring sustainable peace all over Northern Ethiopia. Africa can get to the bottom of its own problems in its own ways putting into effect the notion of Finding African solution to African problems without the interference of any third party plays a huge role in building a strong continent and taking Africa to the next level of accomplishment.

In the present circumstances, in the aftermath of the positive developments of the peace implementation, the wider international community has been singing praise of the commitment of the federal government for oiling the wheels of the peace implementation.

The AUC Chairperson Moussa Faki Mahamat and other high-ranking dignitaries remarked in the 36th Africa Union Assembly praising the Ethiopia's peace efforts in resolving the two-year conflict in negotiation.

The 36th Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union kicked off at the AU Headquarters with a theme: "Accelerating the implementation of the Africa Continental Free Trade Area agreement (AfCFTA)."

In his opening remarks, the AUC Chairperson

acknowledged the government, especially Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed's dedication to ending conflict in North Ethiopia. "Even though Africa has encountered multifaceted problems including unconstitutional overthrow of governments, insurgencies, terrorism and post-election violence, Ethiopia showcased our perseverance to resolve our problems."

For his part, the UN Secretary-General Antonio Gutierrez congratulated Premier Abiy for the effort and commitment he has demonstrated to bring peace to Ethiopia. "African leaders should work to ensure peace throughout the continent." The AU Outgoing Chairperson and Senegalese President Macky Sall said: "We should close the door for conflict and open the door for African solutions. A step taken by Ethiopia in this regard is commendable."

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed told the gathering that Ethiopia applied the principle of African solutions to African problems. "Ethiopia's commitment in resolving its own problems without the interference of third parties is exemplary to other countries." The Premier also commended the AU's support for Ethiopia's peace process.

The AU-brokered Cessation of Hostilities Agreement (CoHA) between the government and TPLF is said to demonstrate Africa's ability to solve internal problems and protect its interest and bring inclusive economic progress.

In addition to a high-level delegation of the AU's 55 AU Member States, European Council President Charles Michel was in attendance at the Summit.

The 36th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of States and Government of the African Union (AU) commended and appreciated the role played by AU in the peace process signed between the Federal

Government of Ethiopia and TPLF, the AU Political Affairs, Peace & Security Commissioner, Bankole Adeoye said.

In press conference he gave, Commissioner Bankole Adeoye said: "we have high points in 2022, the African Union-led peace process for northern Ethiopia, resulted in the signing of the agreement for lasting peace through cessation of hostilities agreement between the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and the TPLF, according to information obtained from *Ethiopian News Agency*."

"The peace agreement was warmly welcomed by the assembly, he said, adding the summit commended and appreciated the role played by the high level panel, led by Former President Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria, supported by Former President, Uhuru Kenyatta of Kenya and Former Deputy President of South Africa, Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka.

He further said that, it is clear that we have to continue to work with the all stakeholders.

The most important emphasis should be placed to what remains to the implementation of the peace process in northern Ethiopia, the commissioner said.

He added: "This peace process continues to be steadily achieved based on its timeline and all the major issues are being tackled, including the disarmament demobilization and reintegration program that is included in the Pretoria agreement.

"Seizing the opportunity, the assembly recognized the contributions made particularly by the Government of South Africa for hosting the Pretoria talks that resulted in the signing of the agreement on the second of November 2022, as well as for the Government of Kenya for hosting the two rounds of meetings for commanders that led to the Nairobi Declaration, he noted.

Photo: Eyob Teferi

Society

“Closing gaps in gender equity”

BY ELIZABETH MENGISTU

Several decades have already elapsed since the issue of gender equality has become a global agenda. The 17 Sustainable Development Goals adopted by UN members also set a target to achieve gender equality and empower women and girls by 2030 understanding the critical significance of curbing gender inequalities, and the positive impacts that women and girls can bring about in global socioeconomic development.

Ironically, even after a century, many women are destined to stay at home and still suffer from gender inequality locked out of economic participation and opportunities.

According to the estimation by the World Economic Forum (WEF-2021), carried out based on the 2020 trends, the world is now going backwards regarding gender equality.

“At the present rate of progress, it could take us nearly 100 years to close the gender gap,” it says.

As to the study, COVID-19 pandemic has raised new barriers to building inclusive and prosperous economies and societies. Pre-existing gender gaps have amplified the crisis asymmetrically between men and women, even as women have been at the frontlines of managing the crisis as essential workers.

In fact, over the decades, several promising changes are seen at global level. Many



women have come to the leadership ladder, and many more can join high-paying jobs, register glittering success in areas they engaged in; once alleged to be men's businesses.

However, the progress, in black and white, is sluggish that demands a lot of courage to fight biases, commitment to beat the challenges and; calls for accelerated and urgent actions from all.

Recently, the 27th Ordinary General Assembly of the African First Ladies for Development (OAFIAD), which was established by Africa's First Ladies and strives to be a united voice for Africa's most susceptible citizens; women and children, was held here in Addis Ababa at the African Union Commission (AUC) Hall.

The Assembly, which was conducted on the sidelines of the 36th Summit of the African Union, discussed a number of issues

regarding African women and girls and on ways to unlock women's and girls' potential to drive social and economic progress in Africa.

In her opening remark, First Lady Zinash Tayachew said that, empowering women and closing the gaps in gender equality is a key to improving the lives of women and girls in the continent.

To this effect, according to the First Lady, more energy should be applied and high levels of engagement should be exerted from respective countries to bring about substantial change, narrow the gap in gender equality and improve the lives of women and girls thereby accelerating the continent's economy.

First Lady Zinash also called for swift, concerted efforts and firm focus on gender equality to close gaps gender.

At the Assembly, matters related to climate change, HIV and AIDS, the prevention of HIV transmission from mother to child, child health, cervical cancer, awareness-early diagnosis, and treatment of the cancer, and the like challenges discussed thoroughly. Most importantly, the need to collaborate with concerned bodies, bold action and dedication was emphasized to close the gap.

The progress that has been made over the past 20 years through the continued engagement of African First Ladies was also hailed.

First Ladies of the continent also reflected the energy applied to empower women

economically within their respective countries, shared their experiences and views to participants. They also emphasized on the need for continued collaboration and collective action with all stakeholders, particularly in strengthening women's role in economic development and mitigating the effects of climate change.

This year's OAFIAD's Assembly theme was “Closing gaps in gender equity,” to drive social and economic progress in Africa.

At the Session, including First Lady Zinash Tayachew and the OAFIAD secretariat; first ladies of Africa, Commissioner for Health, Humanitarian Affairs and Social Development, African Union and development partners; Representatives of UN agencies; the private sector; high-level government officials, donors and members of civil society took part.

The Organization of African First Ladies for Development (OAFIAD) is an advocacy organization where First Ladies of Africa seek to leverage their unique position to advocate for policies that make health services accessible and laws that boost women and youth empowerment.

First Ladies of Africa reinforce favorable policies and programs through advocacy, resource mobilization and development of partnerships with all stakeholders at all levels. First Ladies engage in various community-level activities to sensitize communities and create awareness on health risks and policies, it was learnt.



Published on every Tuesday in cooperation with the Federal Ministry of Education

Triggering global effort to fulfill 222 million children's dreams

BY EPHREM ANDARGACHEW

The Ethiopian Ministry of Education is playing its role well to rehabilitate children that faced manmade and natural disasters. It is also working to provide millions of children with access to safe and protective learning opportunities.

Ethiopian Education Minister Professor Birhanu Nega called on the global community to provide financial support to realize the dreams of 222 million children come true.

The Minister has participated in an international fundraising platform forum called “Education Cannot Wait”. During the occasion, he called on the international community to contribute vivid and strong financial support for the education sector to make the dreams of children come true.

Education helps students to bring about desired behavioral changes, use their potential and make their dream come true. Nevertheless, the sector, in developing countries, has faced various draw backs. Among others, financial problem is a major problem for access to education, building and rebuilding schools, and fulfilling school facilities. As a result, the sector requires



a huge amount of money to withstand financial challenges.

Taking this fact into account, Education Cannot-Wait (ECW) was established in 2016 during the World Humanitarian Summit by international humanitarian and development aid actors, along with public and private donors.

ECW is trying to help reposition education as a priority on the humanitarian issue, usher in a more collaborative method among actors on the ground and foster additional funding

to ensure that every crisis-affected child and young person is in school and learning based on the recognition that continuous access to quality learning as a priority for children and families affected by conflicts, natural disasters, and displacement and that no organization can do it alone.

ECW comes as a ground-breaking initiative bringing together public and private partners eager to work together and mobilize the funding required to deploy immediate and sustainable programs tailor-made to the

educational needs of these children.

Prof. Berhanu Nega, who attended the resource gathering forum called the “Education Cannot-Wait” program, shared Ethiopia's experience with the international community on the topic of managing education in a difficult situation.

“Ethiopia has been able to withstand the pandemic of Covid-19, drought, conflict and other pressures. Currently, tens of millions of students have been able to stay in education. The government has also allocated more than 22 percent of the budget for education this academic year.”

Despite the efforts of the government and stakeholders, significant numbers of students still have faced various challenges across the country.

According to an Education Cannot-Wait report, over 222 million children around the world are out of school or in difficult circumstances due to various natural and man-made reasons. In addition, 78 million children have never been to school.

These children, including Ethiopian students, are out of school. Hence, the forum is important to work closely and find concrete solutions for children who are out of school and far from their dreams.

Planet Earth

Supporting artisanal miners to reap better benefits

BY FIKADU BELAY

For many years, Ethiopia has let down mining, an industry that serves as the backbone of its economy. There are untapped natural minerals everywhere in the country with an impact on the country's culture, traditions, way of life, and use of resources.

It is common knowledge that the earlier civilization of the country relied heavily on small-scale mining for the production of minerals and rocks.

In addition to the absence of competent labor in the field these weren't utilized correctly. Yet it is now well recognized that it has begun to work better than ever to promote the industry, particularly since the advent of the reform government. Accordingly it has given due attention to the mining sector.

Most of the time, locals mine the minerals in their area using manual labor and hand tools. These minerals, which include gold, copper, iron, and other jewelry, contribute greatly to the economy of their country.

Artisanal and small-scale mining activities provide a variety of economic benefits to the growth of the nation, including boosting income, opening up job opportunities, and gaining foreign currency.

It is a sector that enables the government to generate significant foreign exchange earnings by supplying the national bank with significant gold output from the areas where gold is produced by artisans.

According to Minister of State for Mines Million Matheos, conventional production accounts for 85–90% of the gold products exported to other nations, with the remaining portion being handled by Midroc Gold and other small-scale manufacturers.

According to this, Gambela, Oromia, Sidima, Tigray, Benishangul Gumz, and South West Ethiopia are among the regions where gold is produced in Ethiopia.

Artisanal gold mining has been a source of subsistence for the rural people. Research shows that nearly 1.2 million people are engaged in artisanal mining at the national level, including those who extract stones and sand used in various constructions and other minerals such as gold, tantalum, and iron. And also about seven million people are dependent on the workers who engage in mining occupation throughout the country.

Since ancient times, traditional gold producers in Ethiopia have been producing gold in different areas, which has allowed the community to live a better life in addition to living their daily lives.

He said that people do not follow the scientific method and follow the information from other sources to dig in the areas.

Modern technology, including household appliances, electrical wiring, automobiles, the construction of buildings and roads, space shuttles, and pharmaceuticals, depends on mineral resources. In this regard, the demand for minerals will keep rising in the future. It is necessary to



Among mining villages throughout the country, small-scale gold mining is a substantial source of income. Yet, the social, cultural, and economic return of gold mining is not in favor of those who engaged in it. The prevalence of child labor, health risks, the smuggling of gold miners, and dishonesty have impacted the benefit of the community engaged in artisanal mining.

build technologies that can support a safe and sustainable exploitation of the mineral resources in order to legitimize the environmental effects of mining and petroleum production with the demand for minerals. Using environmental impact assessment criteria is one method for ensuring the sustainable and safe development of mineral resources.

For this reason, he explained that the ministry should carry out control and monitoring in accordance with the principle of environmental safety and national regulations during mining operations. He said that the ministry will work to lift the soil and clean the area when the mineral is extracted.

Among mining villages throughout the country, small-scale gold mining is a substantial source of income. Yet, the social, cultural, and economic return of gold mining is not in favor of those who engaged in it. The prevalence of child labor, health risks, the smuggling of gold miners, and dishonesty have impacted the benefit of the community engaged in artisanal mining.

He claimed that over the years, smuggling has been used by traditional miners to sell and trade our nation's valuable resources at unfair prices. For culturally specialized and artificial mining activities, a comprehensive national policy and regulation framework must be established, just as for any other industry.

According to him, efforts are being made to raise the sector's standing by encouraging everyone who works hard and makes a positive difference to do so.

He stated that states that continue to grant business licenses for traditional mining operations are in

charge of overseeing and managing them. But due to the loop holes in the issuance of licence and the regulation works they have ended up encouraging illegal trade in addition to many other issues.

He said that the ministry is collaborating with the necessary parties to monitor and regulate the areas where minerals are produced in order to stop the looming illicit trade and trafficking of gold, which is now spreading.

And also, the ministry is working to improve the lives of traditional producers and solve the problems that force them to engage in illegal activities.

Due attention is not given to increase the production and productivity of traditional and small-scale mineral producers by using technologies and modernizing their production methods and saving their time and energy to produce better products, he said.

He pointed out that the government is undertaking various works to support the growth of the country's economy by equipping traditional artisans with technological tools in a bid to improving the peoples standard of living, and mitigate the illegal trade that is wasting the country's wealth.

In addition, the ministry should strengthen the sector by taking experiences from different countries and using technological tools.

Besides increasing productivity, technology tools also help to control illegal trade transactions. He pointed out that minerals are being used as resources for domestic industries, earning foreign currency, replacing imported industrial products with domestic products, and creating job opportunities for citizens.